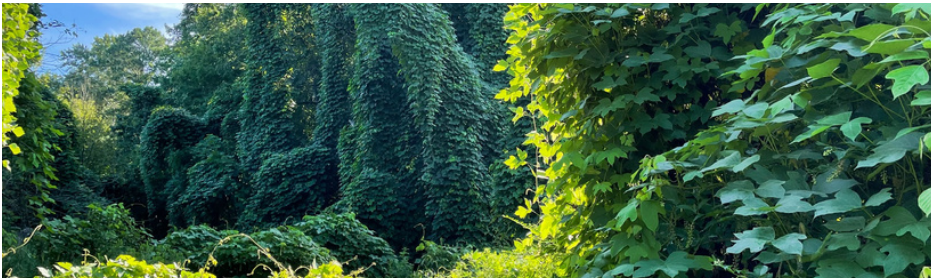# INVASIVE SPECIES KEYSTONE INITIATIVE

Advancing a National Early Detection and Rapid Response Framework

Invasive species are among the most significant drivers of global biodiversity loss. They threaten native plants and wildlife habitats, human health, cultural heritage, agriculture, and recreation. In some areas of the United States, invasive plants, animals, and pathogens are driving native species towards extinction. Invasive aquatic species interfere with local water supplies and degrade fisheries and watersports. Invasive plants and insects can fuel catastrophic wildfires, devastate culturally significant species, and damage valued food crops. Overall costs of invasive species to the U.S. economy are estimated to be in the tens of billions of dollars annually.The impacts of climate change, such as sea level rise, stronger and more frequent storm events, and warming temperatures, are expected to open new pathways for arrival and enhance the likelihood of establishment for invasive species.

Communities are contending with the economic and ecological costs of numerous invasive species already established across the United States while newly arriving invasive species threaten to tip the scale toward irreparable losses. Invasive species often cross jurisdictional boundaries; thus, their management often requires interjurisdictional solutions. Community leaders and private landowners, along with local, state, Tribal, territorial, and federal agencies, have been working diligently to stop the arrival and stem the spread of many invasive species and to reduce the impacts of those already established.

With historic investments provided through President Biden's Investing in America agenda, the Interior Department's Restoration and Resilience Framework is addressing these urgent threats. Working in collaboration with stakeholders across the country, the Department is advancing a National Early Detection and Rapid Response (EDRR) Framework to complement existing systems in place for agricultural pests and pathogens. The Framework is a coordinated and strategic set of actions to identify initial detections of invasive species and eradicate them before they establish, spread, and cause harm to economies and environments – thereby protecting the nation's lands and waters and the communities they support.

By investing in a strategic set of crosscutting projects, the Department is bolstering capabilities for detection and response, boosting ecosystem resilience, and achieving lasting outcomes for people and nature. The goal is to substantially advance national early detection and rapid response actions that give managers an upper hand in safeguarding the nation from invasive species.

THE INVASIVE SPECIES KEYSTONE INITIATIVE IS:

Working with Lead Management Authorities to Identify Priorities

Key to this effort is identifying high-risk species that are not yet in the United States, but are likely to become invasive if established, and to identify specific areas in the United States that are at the highest risk of invasion to focus early detection efforts. This work is being conducted in collaboration with many federal and non-federal partners.

Developing New Tools and Technologies

The Department is working with stakeholders to develop tools and services for detecting invasive species. It is also creating online hubs—informed by end users—where natural resource managers can readily access information to guide early detection and rapid response activities. Efforts underway will further enhance decision support and detection tools for use by managers to target where and how to search for newly arriving invasive species.

Building Detection and Response Capacity

Through historic new funding, the Department is increasing capacity to respond to new invasive species, including through the establishment of a Rapid Response Fund for Aquatic Invasive Species. Future investments will continue to strengthen on-the-ground early detection and rapid response efforts.

Creating a National Network

The National EDRR Framework aims to connect and leverage expertise and resources across the federal and non-federal community to strengthen effective EDRR actions and safeguard the nation from future invasive species threats.